Meaning behind “Reassigning Meaning” by Simi Linton

By Jisu Pang

The article is structured by each sub-topic of the text. I thought that was a clever way to write this article since there is so much to talk about and discuss about disabilities and their meanings. This topic is not just black and white. There is so much to it from the medical definition of “disabled” to how people are influenced by different names people call people with disabilities. I think the presentation of this article relates to the title and the message of the article. “Reassigning Meaning” shows how there are so many different meanings to one word and how it is different to everyone. Simi Linton has categorized her thoughts into neat sections that make it easier to read and focus on.   
 This article definitely opened my eyes. To be honest, I make jokes to my friends if they are in a cast or crutches by calling them “cripples” but now I can see how bad it would make someone feel that actually was living with a disability that disabled them from walking. I think Simi Linton’s audience ranges from young to old. It doesn’t matter what age you are because you can always learn about this. This article can definitely teach someone a different perspective on something he or she has always been around.   
 One part I really liked was in the “Naming the Group” section when she says that she agree with what Gill says (225). Gill says, “Actually, we’re all disabled in some way, aren’t we? (225)” I think that is such a true statement. Just because a doctor declares me that I have no disability, does not mean I am not disabled. Also, disabilities do not always have to by physical. There are emotional disabilities, mental disabilities and more. No one is perfect.   
 I think the author’s purpose for writing this is to show everyone who reads this article that disability is not just black and white. There are so much more to it and I think she did a great job of pushing the other sides and meanings. This article was definitely interesting but sometimes I felt like she was dragging on and on. I got bored near the end of the sections sometimes because it was too much. One of my favorite quotes was, “The disabled or the handicapped was replaced in the mid-70s by people with disabilities to maintain disability as a characteristic of the individual, as opposed to the defining variable (225).” I think that’s such a powerful statement. A disability should not define who a person is. That is just like saying your outer appearance matches your personality. I really enjoy the quotes she used in her article. I think they captured her point really well. It also has so much meaning behind each one so it makes the reader think and develop the ideas more. Simi Linton definitely did her research for this article. She has many quotes and evidence to back her points up. I thought she was trustworthy and fair-minded. The point of her article was to look at the other meanings and show the readers that there is more than one side to disabilities.

Works Cited

Linton, Simi. "17." *The Disability Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2010. Print.